

Spreading The Good News Of Ramadaan

Shaykh Abdullaah al-Fawzaan

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Translator: Isma'eel Alarcon

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of Allaah (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Ramadan has come to you - a blessed month. Allaah has made obligatory upon you its fasting. In it, the gates of heaven are open, the gates of the Hellfire are closed and the evil devils are chained. To Allaah belongs a night in it, which is better than a thousand months. Whosoever is prevented from its good, then he has been deprived." (Ahmed & an-Nasaa'ee)

The hadeeth is a glad tiding to the righteous servants of Allaah, of the coming of the blessed month of Ramadan. The Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) informed his companions of its coming and it was not just a simple relaying of news. Rather, his intent was to give them the glad tidings of a magnificent time of the year, so that the righteous people who are quick to do deeds can give it its due estimate. This is because the Prophet (sall-Allaahu `alayhi wa sallam) explained in it (the hadeeth) what Allaah has prepared for His servants from the ways towards gaining forgiveness and His contentment - and there are many ways. So whosoever has forgiveness escaped from him during the month of Ramadan, then he has been deprived with the utmost deprivation.

From the great favours and bounties that Allaah has bestowed upon His servants is that He has prepared for them meritorious occasions so that they may be of profit for those who obey Him and a race for those who rush to compete (for good deeds). These meritorious occasions are times for fulfilling hopes by exerting in obedience and uplifting flaws and deficiencies by self-rectification and repentance.

There is not a single occasion from these virtuous times, except that Allaah has assigned in it works of obedience, by which one may draw close to Him. And Allaah possesses the most beautiful things as gifts, which He bestows upon whomsoever He wills by His Grace and Mercy.

So the one who achieves true happiness is he who takes advantage of these virtuous months, days and hours and draws closer to His Guardian in them, by doing what is prescribed in them from the acts of obedience.

Thus perhaps he will be showered with one of the many blessings of those occasions and be helped by it, with an assistance that saves him from the Fire and what it contains, such as its blazing heat. (These are the words of Ibn Rajab in Lataa'if-ul-Ma'aarif)

Being able to reach Ramadan is a magnificent bounty in itself, bestowed upon the one who reaches it and rises to its occasion, by standing in prayer during its night and fasting during its day. In it, he returns to his Protector - from disobeying Him to obeying Him, from neglecting Him to remembering Him, from remaining distant from Him to turning towards Him in submissive repentance.

Some of the Salaf used to say:

"Indeed Allaah, the Most High, has made the month of Ramadan as a competition

for His creatures, in which they may race with one another to His pleasure, by obeying Him. Thus, one group comes first and so they prosper and another group comes last and so they fail.” (Lataa’if-ul-Ma’arif of Ibn Rajab)

Also, the individual does not know if this is perhaps the last Ramadan he will ever see in his life, if he completes it. How many men, women and children have fasted with us the past year, and yet now they lie buried in the depths of the earth, depending on their good deeds. And they expected to fast many more Ramadan’s. Likewise, we too shall all follow their path.

Therefore, it is upon the Muslim to rejoice at this magnificent occasion for obedience. And he should not renounce it, but instead busy himself with what will benefit him and what will cause its effect to remain. For what else is it, except numbered days, which are fasted in succession and which finish rapidly.

May Allaah make us, as well as you, from among those who are foremost in attaining good deeds.